OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT AT A MASTER’S FOCUSED INSTITUTION

Robert M. Augustine, Dean of the Graduate School
Eastern Illinois University
http://www.eiu.edu/~graduate/forms/2009CGS.php
GOOD PRACTICES FOR ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING, AAHE 2004

Driving Forces
1. Mission Driven
2. Use Driven
3. Faculty Driven
4. Integrated

Guiding Principles
5. Clear Goals
6. Clear Conditions
7. Accurate Data
8. Used and Shared
“Where questions about educational mission and values are skipped over, assessment threatens to be an exercise in measuring what’s easy, rather than a process for improving what we really care about.”

Banta, 1996
MISSION CONCEPTS

- Mission drives assessment
- Assessment integrated with program review
- Program achievements linked to resources
- Resources enhance mission
3 LEVELS OF MISSION AT EIU
VERIFIED BY ASSESSMENT OUTCOMES

EIU: Superior Graduate Programs
CGS: Content, Thinking, Communication, Research
CDS: Practice, Certification, Licensure
ASSESSMENT STARTING POINT: THE MISSION STATEMENT

- Program Mission Statement
  - Focus, Strengths, Uniqueness
- Graduate Mission Statement
  - Diversity, Outcomes, Rigor, Scholarship, Mentoring
- University Mission Statement
  - Superior Graduate Study
THE PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

- **CDS**
  - Focus: Clinical practice, certification, licensure
  - Strengths: Autism
  - Uniqueness: Medical and educational settings

- **CHM**
  - Focus: General areas, PHD/teaching, industry
  - Strengths: Unclear
  - Uniqueness: None identified
ASSESSMENT OF
CHM MISSION STATEMENTS

- 12 CHM MS Programs Illinois Public Institutions
  - Focus: physical, organic, etc.
  - Strengths: Materials science, Community College Teaching
  - Uniqueness: PSM

- Other CHM MS Private and Beyond Illinois
  - Clear missions
  - Identified strengths
  - Uniqueness: PSM emerging as a unique area for many
ASSESSMENT ADVANCEMENT
MISSION FOCUS

- Mission statements
  - Guide program assessment
  - Lead to mission-focused improvements
  - Verify graduate expectations
  - Verify university expectations
“If an assessment doesn’t help improve teaching and learning activities, why bother with it?

In order to be useful assessment must correspond to your key learning goals and your curriculum.”

Suskie, 2004
USE CONCEPTS

1. Uses = validate & track changes in critical knowledge
2. Goals = desired critical knowledge
3. Methods = means of acquiring critical knowledge
4. Data = evidence =,>,,< expectations
Data
Expectation/Observations

Uses
Verification/Improvements

Methods
Teaching/Experiences

Goals
Knowledge/Skills
CONTINUUM OF ASSESSMENT USE

Initial
- Verifies achievements
- Verifies strengths
- Identifies weaknesses
- Identifies ways to improve

Advanced
- Verifies mission achieved
- Implements new goals, methods, data, uses
- Integrates assessment into program review
Outcomes verify achievement of mission
Outcomes validate teaching methods
Outcomes track effectiveness of program changes
Outcomes secure resources/program needs
Initial
- Clear mission focused
- Small number
- Direct measures
- Summative measures

Advanced
- Clear mission focused
- Expanded number
- Direct measures
- Indirect measures
- Summative measures
- Formative measures
JUDGING EFFECTIVENESS

GOALS

- Reflect mission and values
- Essential to the program
- Desire to achieve these goals
- Achievement shared/celebrated and used to secure support
CONTINUUM OF ASSESSMENT METHODS

Initial
- Courses necessary
- Applied experiences necessary

Advanced
- Courses necessary and sufficient
- Applied experiences necessary and sufficient
- Other experiences necessary and sufficient
Desired learning is clearly stated and taught
Desired learning opportunities are necessary
Desired learning opportunities are sufficient and/or achieve specialized strengths or uniqueness
CONTINUUM OF ASSESSMENT
DATA & MEASUREMENT

**Initial**
- Valid, reliable direct, summative measures
  - Thesis
  - Comp exams
  - Certification/licensure tests

**Advanced**
- Valid, reliable direct summative and formative measures
  - Thesis, exams, tests
  - Rubrics, specific points
- Valid, reliable, indirect measures
  - Employer, alumni surveys
JUDGING EFFECTIVENESS
DATA & MEASUREMENT

- Measurement is valid
- Measurement is reliable
- Multiple measures
- Systematic (consistent, at same point)
- Time to collect the data is affordable
- Money/resources to collect the data is affordable
- Time to cost ratio = most valuable data
ASSESSMENT ADVANCEMENT

USE FOCUS

- Explain/define what a program wants to do before any other actions are taken
- Link assessment with action to verify/improve the program
- Retain the focus on taking action vs. completing a task
“Assessment of student learning for program improvement is really transformational. We went into this process convinced that we were doing good work in preparing ESL/Bilingual educators and after two full rounds of assessment work we are even more committed and enthusiastic about our work as educators.”

Chris Cartwright, Portland State University
FACULTY PRINCIPLES

- Administrative Commitment
- Faculty Leadership for Assessment
- Graduate Faculty Leadership for Graduate Assessment
ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITMENT

- Administrative culture of assessment
- Collaborative culture among deans
- Faculty integration into the culture
- Assessment integrated into administrative decision making
- Resources to engage in effective assessment
- Recognition when advancements are made
Committee and council structure
Defining documents to guide faculty
Development programs to advance faculty
Ease of participation
Define assessment for graduate programs
Determine how assessment is integrated with program review
Process for communicating and recognizing achievements
Public acknowledgement & recognition of program quality

Public acknowledgement & recognition for meeting the mission of the institution and Graduate School

Acquisition of resources that reflect quality and further advance the program
Assessment leads to improvement under these conditions:

- Integrated with a larger set of conditions that promote change (Program Review)
- Integrated part of decision making

Banta, 2004
PROGRAM REVIEW CRITERIA REFLECT GRADUATE MISSION

- Diversity
- Assessment
  - Depth of knowledge, thinking, communication, research
- Rigor
- Student Scholarship
- Faculty Mentoring
Criterion 1: Diversity

- Enrollment/Diversity Plan
- Assistantship/Scholarship Plan
- Matriculation Management
- Graduate Placement
Assessment Results Center for Academic Support & Achievement
  - Written & Oral Communication
  - Depth of Knowledge (Technology & Ethics)
  - Critical Thinking & Problem Solving
  - Research & Scholarship

Assessment Results Graduate School
Criterion 3: Rigor

- Mission Planning
- Curricular Leadership
- External Review Contributions to Quality
- Capstone Contributions to Quality
- Student Contributions to Quality
- Alumni Contributions to Quality
- External Partnership Contributions to Quality
Criterion 4 Scholarship

- Sustained Student Research
- Commitment to Research & Travel Grants
- Showcasing Scholarship
- Award Participation
Criterion 5 Mentoring

- Coordinator Leadership
- Faculty Scholarship
Review criteria are mission driven
Assessment integrated into criteria
Review achievements validate quality
Quality achievement “First Choice” yields funding
NEW RESOURCES FOCUS ON ADVANCING MISSION

- Higher stipends
- More assistantships
- Travel awards
- Entrepreneurial Awards
- College and Provost investments
First Choice Program

- Diversity
- Faculty Mentoring
- Assessment
- Student Scholarship
- Rigor
HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL ANALYSIS

Enrollment…..Assistantships…..DIVERSITY…Matriculation…..Placement

University Assessment…..ASSESSMENT…..Graduate School Assessment

Mission…Curriculum…Capstone…RIGOR…Students…Alumni…Partners

Research….Grants…STUDENT RESEARCH…Showcase…Awards

Coordinator Leadership…FACULTY MENTORING…Faculty Mentoring
MEANINGFULNESS FAILURES

- Mission disconnected from assessment
- Assessment an isolated process
- Program review an isolated process
- Assessment data, program review data shelved
- Resource acquisition disconnected from learning outcomes and program quality
- No consistent criteria for allocating resources
CHARACTERISTICS

Stage 1

- Mission: Stated but not driving assessment
- Use: Marginalized not linked to advancement
- Faculty: Commitment not evident
- Integration: Comprehensive program quality issues
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

Program
- Best teaching practices & technology
- Multiple pathways and diversity
- Excellence in communication
- Excellence in research

Graduate School
- Depth of content
- Critical Thinking/ Problem Solving
- Communication
- Research
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION
EIU, GRADUATE SCHOOL, PROGRAM
MISSION ASSESSMENT NOT ACHIEVED

- Not Achieved: Superior Graduate Programs
- Not Achieved: Content, Thinking, Communication, Research
- Not Achieved: Best teaching practices, multiple pathways And diversity, communication excellence, Research excellence
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION
ASSESSMENT OUTCOMES

- Uses: No evidence of meeting mission
- Goals: Not clear or mission focused
- Methods: Not clear where learning is to occur
- Data: Expectations minimal or below graduate level expectations
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROGRAM REVIEW ASSESSMENT ONE SYMPTOM

- Diversity: Falling enrollments
- Assessment: Not meeting EIU, Graduate School, Program mission
- Rigor: Significant curriculum weaknesses
- Scholarship: Declining student scholarly works
- Mentoring: High teaching loads minimize mentoring
ELE: HORIZONTAL & VERTICAL ISSUES

Enrollment.....Assistantships.....DIVERSITY.....Matriculation.....Placement

University Assessment.....ASSESSMENT.....Graduate School Assessment

Mission...Curriculum...Capstone...RIGOR...Students...Alumni...Partners

Research....Grants...STUDENT RESEARCH...Showcase...Awards

Coordinator Leadership...FACULTY MENTORING...Faculty Mentoring
Step 1 Clarify/verify mission
Step 2 Identify valid assessment uses
   - Identify evidence the missions are met
   - Identify learning methods
   - Develop appropriate expectations
   - Compare outcomes to expectations
Step 3 Secure faculty/coordinator commitment
Step 4 Plan to address other program areas
   - Holding further resources until actions taken
CHARACTERISTICS

- Mission: Driving assessment
- Use: Assessment used and linked to advancements
- Faculty: Coordinator leading/faculty engaged
- Integration: Working toward First Choice designation
- Resources: Considered for additional resources
Program
- Advanced knowledge in concentration
- Analytical/theoretical thinking in concentration
- Communication in concentration
- Social science research methods

Graduate School
- Depth of content
- Critical Thinking/ Problem Solving
- Communication
- Research
POLITICAL SCIENCE GRADUATE SCHOOL & PROGRAM ASSESSMENT: MISSION MET

To Be Determined: Superior Graduate Programs

Achieved:
Content, Thinking, Communication, Research

Achieved:
Advanced knowledge in concentration, Analytical/theoretical thinking, communication Social science research
Diversity
- Growing and diverse enrollments
- Do matriculation & diversity rates meet criteria?

Assessment
- Used to verify and advance mission

Rigor
- Achievements in all areas & external validation of quality

Scholarship
- Exemplary student scholarship/program strength

Mentoring
- Exemplary faculty mentoring/program strength
PLS HORIZONTAL & VERTICAL ACHIEVEMENTS
REMAINING QUESTION: DIVERSITY

- Enrollment
- Assistantships
- DIVERSITY
- Matriculation
- Placement

- University Assessment
- ASSESSMENT
- Graduate School Assessment

- Mission
- Curriculum
- Capstone
- RIGOR
- Students
- Alumni
- Partners

- Research
- Grants
- STUDENT RESEARCH
- Showcase
- Awards

- Coordinator Leadership
- FACULTY MENTORING
- Faculty Mentoring
CHARACTERISTICS

Stage 3

- Mission
  - Exemplary/Recognized with awards
- Use
  - Assessment verifies and advances mission; data communicates excellence to public
- Faculty
  - Coordinator leadership/strong culture of assessment
- Integration
  - Named a First Choice Program
- Resources
  - Obtaining additional resources to support program
EXAMPLE
COMMUNICATION DISORDERS & SCIENCES

Program

- Knowledge nature, evaluation & treatment
- Evidenced based practice
- Professional oral/written
- Research as foundation for the discipline

Graduate School

- Depth of content
- Critical Thinking/Problem Solving
- Communication
- Research
COMMUNICATION DISORDERS & SCIENCES
EIU, GRADUATE SCHOOL, PROGRAM
ASSESSMENT: MISSION MET

Achieved: Superior Graduate Programs

Achieved:
Content, Thinking, Communication, Research

Achieved:
Knowledge of nature evaluation treatment,
Evidence based practice, professional
Communication, Research foundation
CDS PROGRAM REVIEW
ASSESSMENT INTEGRATED WITH BROAD CONDITIONS

- Diversity
  - Exemplary: Highly selective and diverse
- Assessment
  - Exemplary: Earned awards
- Rigor
  - Exemplary: accreditation, awards, and partnerships
- Scholarship
  - Student scholarship a program strength
- Mentoring
  - Exemplary faculty mentoring/Faculty win awards
CDS HORIZONTAL & VERTICAL ACHIEVEMENTS

- Enrollment...Assistantships...DIVERSITY...Matriculation...Placement
- University Assessment...ASSESSMENT...Graduate School Assessment
- Mission...Curriculum...Capstone...RIGOR...Students...Alumni...Partners
- Research...Grants...STUDENT RESEARCH...Showcase...Awards
- Coordinator Leadership...FACULTY MENTORING...Faculty Mentoring
25 Degree Programs
8 Programs Named FCPs
3 Programs Scheduled for FC Reviews
12 Programs Completed FC Consultations
4 Completing AQIP Reviews
INTEGRATION

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

- Consistent Expectations of Quality
- Value of Assessment
- Sharing of Best Practices
- Consistent Process for Addressing Weaknesses
- Resources Tied to Outcomes
UNIVERSITY INFRASTRUCTURE

- Center for Academic Support and Achievement
- Committee for the Assessment of Student Learning
- Scholarly resources on assessment
- Newsletters and Workshops
- Annual Assessment Plans & Progress Reports
- Provost’s Award for Assessment
STREAMLINED PROCESS

- Summary Forms (web site)
- Annual Review by Director
- Annual Review by Dean
- Council on Graduate Studies